



Department of Justice

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DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE AND USDA ANNOUNCE AGENDA FOR DECEMBER 8 MARGINS WORKSHOP

Workshop to be Held at the U.S. Department of Agriculture

WASHINGTON -- The Department of Justice and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced today the agenda and panelists for the Dec. 8, 2010, joint public workshop on margins in agriculture. This workshop, the last in a series of five, is focused on the margins at various levels of the agricultural supply chain.

The workshop will be held in the Jefferson Auditorium of USDA's South Building, 1400 Independence Avenue S.W., Washington, D.C. Attendance is free and open to the public. The general public and media interested in attending the workshop should register at www.surveymonkey.com/s/marginsworkshop.

The workshop will begin with opening remarks by U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder and U.S. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack. Following the introduction, there will be four panels composed of producers, academics and other industry stakeholders. First, Secretary Vilsack, Attorney General Holder and Assistant Attorney General for the Justice Department's Antitrust Division Christine Varney, will moderate a discussion that includes participants at each level of the agricultural supply chain. Second, a panel on margins in the dairy industry will look at the costs and profits from farmers to retailers. The third panel of the day will look at issues in the retail sector, examining concentration, margins and similar trends. The final panel will discuss margins in the livestock and poultry industries. The workshop will conclude with remarks from Assistant Attorney General Varney.

Additionally, there will be two hours dedicated to public testimony. This will be split into two sessions, one at mid-day and the other after the final panel.

The schedule for the day is as follows:

8:30 a.m - 8:45 a.m. EST

Opening Remarks

Eric Holder, Attorney General, U.S. Department of Justice

Tom Vilsack, Secretary of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture

Christine Varney, Assistant Attorney General, Antitrust Division, U.S. Department of Justice

8:45 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. EST

Panel I - Industry Dynamics from Farm to Consumers

Panelists will offer their perspective on supply chain issues that impact producers, processors, retailers and consumers.

Moderators: Eric Holder, Attorney General, U.S. Department of Justice
Tom Vilsack, Secretary of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture
Christine Varney, Assistant Attorney General, Antitrust Division, U.S.
Department of Justice

Ben Burkett, producer and local distributor, Mississippi Association of Cooperatives
Barry Carpenter, chief executive officer, National Meat Association
Erik Lieberman, regulatory counsel, Food Marketing Institute
Vaughn Meyer, cattle producer, South Dakota
Dan Vincent, president and chief executive officer, Pacific Coast Producers
Christopher Waldrop, director, Food Policy Institute, Consumer Federation of America

10:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m. EST

Coffee Break

10:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. EST

Panel II - Margins in the Dairy Industry

This panel will discuss the various levels of the dairy supply chain, offering explanations for recent trends and the effects of these trends.

Moderator: Mark Tobey, Special Counsel for Agriculture and State Relations, Antitrust Division, U.S. Department of Justice

Eunice Biel, dairy producer, Minnesota
David DeSantis, chief of enforcement and accounting, Pennsylvania Milk Marketing Board
Buster Goff, dairy producer, New Mexico
Rigoberto Lopez, professor of economics, University of Connecticut
Chuck Nicholson, professor of agribusiness, California Polytechnic State University

11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. EST

Public Testimony

12:30 p.m. - 1:15 p.m. EST

Lunch

1:15 p.m. - 2:45 p.m. EST

Panel III – Issues in Food Retailing

This panel will examine retailing sector trends and incentives relating to supply arrangements, product placement and consumer choice, and possible explanations on how they have occurred and the impact on all levels of the supply chain.

Moderator: Sharis Arnold Pozen, Chief of Staff, Antitrust Division, U.S. Department of Justice

Albert A. Foer, president, American Antitrust Institute
Wenonah Hauter, executive director, Food & Water Watch
Mary Hendrickson, extension associate professor of rural sociology, University of Missouri
Erik Lieberman, regulatory counsel, Food Marketing Institute
Howard Shelanski, deputy director for antitrust, Bureau of Economics, Federal Trade Commission
Kyle Stiegert, professor of economics, University of Wisconsin
Alvin Vincent, Jr., region 2 director, United Food & Commercial Workers International Union
Tom Wenning, executive vice president and general counsel, National Grocers Association
Bob Young, chief economist, American Farm Bureau Federation

2:45 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. EST Break

3:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. EST Panel IV - Margins in the Livestock and Poultry Industries

This panel will look at trends in the beef, pork and poultry industries. Panelists will discuss the division of the retail dollar, possible explanations for changes and the margins in which the market participants operate in general.

Moderator: James MacDonald, Chief, Agricultural Structure and Productivity Branch,
 Economic Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture

John Crespi, professor of economics, Kansas State University
Allen Lund, cattle producer, North Dakota
Valerie Ruddle, poultry grower, West Virginia
C. Robert Taylor, professor of economics, Auburn University
Eugene Versteeg, pork producer, Iowa
Michael Wohlgenant, professor of economics, North Carolina State University

4:00 p.m. - 4:05 p.m. EST Introduction of Public Testimony and Concluding Remarks

Christine Varney, Assistant Attorney General, Antitrust Division, U.S. Department of Justice

4:05 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. EST Public Testimony

Additional information, including submitted public comments and transcripts for past workshops can be found at the Antitrust Division's agriculture workshop website at www.justice.gov/atr/public/workshops/ag2010/index.htm. While no streaming webcast will be available, transcripts and video will be available for this workshop at a later date on the Antitrust Division's website. Individuals seeking more information on the workshops should contact agriculturalworkshops@usdoj.gov.

- 4 -

Media who wish to attend the workshop may begin arriving at 7:00 a.m. EST and cameras must be pre-set by 7:30 a.m. EST. The closest Metro station to the Jefferson Auditorium of USDA's South Building is Smithsonian.

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